Unfortunately I am running out of time. But there are two things which I would like to point out. We are very happy when you mention that the Prime Minister has gone to Nimibia. It is a reiteration of our solidarity with the people of Africa. Correct. I should mention here that there is a reference in this address about the constitution of a Reception Committee for Nelson Mandela, a great hero who has been released because of international pressure after over 27 years of incarceration. This Government, constituted a Reception Committee. Yes, I welcome that. But today India has the dubious distinction of only forming the Reception Committee and not celebrating his release. Even in London, when Nelson Mandela was released, there were half a million people in the Trafalgar Square. Even in the United States of America and even in the F.R.G. where the Governments had supported the Pretoria regime, people celebrated his release. Here till this date no public function has been organised. The Reception Committee of which I am also a member has not even met. Let me tell you, Sir, that it was a matter of shame for us that two officials — junior officials I will repeat — went to meet Nelson Mandela on behalf of the Government. If not in South Africa, when Nel-
3 P.M. son Mandela was in Zamzia or in Lusaka or in Daras Salaam or in Stockholm, couldn't you send immediately after his release, at least your External Affairs Minister or a Cabinet-rank Minister? And then you say that this is the Reception Committee which we have constituted. Reception Committee for what? Because, today the time of celebrating his release is over, the time has come when the world is watching what developments are taking place in South Africa after his release. So, I am just pointing out as a friend the area where you have failed. And I hope that friends like Kamal Morarka will bring right pressure on their Government in future to correct these aberrations.

I do not have more to add, Sir, I will conclude by saying that where our national interest is involved, you will never find us lacking in supporting the Government's initiatives, particularly on the sensitive issues like Kashmir and Punjab. But your approach should also be not one of confrontation and vendetta. Your approach should not be to postpone the burning issues but you should try to work in harmony, not in harmony with the communal forces but with progressive and secular forces of the country to ensure that India is not plunged into instability and chaos. And, Sir, with these words, I have no option but to oppose this Motion of Thanks on the President's Address which is full of platitudes and vain talk.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI MIRZA IRSHADBAIG): Before the Civil Aviation Minister replies, I have to make one announcement that the Business Advisory Committee, at its meeting held on the 15th March, 1990 have taken a decision that the Prime Minister will reply to the debate on Friday, the 23rd March, 1990, immediately after the Question Hour is over. Now, the Minister of Civil Aviation will reply to the clarifications.

श्री राम चन्द्र विकल (उत्तर प्रदेश) : समाप्त करें क्य ?

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री मीर्जा इ शाद बेग) : इनके बाद चच फिर आरम्भ होगी। We will try to finish it today.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

Accident to the Indian Airlines Airbus A-320 Aircraft at Bangalore—contd.

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN): Sir, the other day, I had made a statement in the House about the unfortunate and tragic accident which took place just outside the Bangalore airport and

[Shri Arif Mohd. Khan]

which took more than 90 human lives and caused concern all over the country.

[The Deputy Chairman in the Chair]

Madam, I am grateful to Mr. Suresh Kalmadi, Mr. Kamal Morarka, Shri A. G. Kulkarni, Dr. Subramanian Swamy, Shri M. A. Baby, Shri Kapil Verma, Shri Gurudas Das Gupta, Shri Narayanasamy, Dr. Thulasi Reddy, Dr. Ratnakar Pandey, Dr. Sarojini Mahishi, Shri Pawan Bansal, Shri Ahluwalia, Shri Ram Naresh Yadavji and Shri V. M. Jadhav for showing concern and giving many positive suggestions.

Before I go into various points which have been raised by the hon. Members, Madam, I would like to start with a comment which was made by Shri Narayanasamy. While seeking clarifications, the first point which he made was that wherever the Minister goes, he announces that an investigation will made, the deal will be probed, and if you have any such plans, why don't you do it. Madam, from the day this unfortunate accident took place till today, on several occasions and at several places, it is true that wherever I have been to, wherever I have met the members of the press, this question has been put to me. But everywhere my reply has been that certain allegations have been published, some news reports have carried these allegations about irregularities having been committed in this deal. But my first priority is enforcement of safety standards at the moment. This question of irregularities, alleged irregularities in the deal, this can be looked into at any time. At the moment ...

SHRI SURESH KALMADI (Maharashtra): Has the inquiry been ordered?

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: When an inquiry is ordered, you will come to know of it. What I mean to say is that nowhere have I made a statement that we are going to probe, that we are going to investigate it. I have not said so anywhere. I do not know what caused the kind of agitation which Shri Narayanasamy displayed in the House the other day. It definitely was not my statement. It must be something else. Something else must be pricking his conscience that he was so agitated and he was complaining about something which really did not exist. The kind of statement he was complaining against, I never made a statement like that.

Shri Kalmadi raised the question about the report which has been published in 'the Indian Express' quoting some extracts from by VCR. He also talked about the Ram Das Committee's report, the engineer's strike and he said that the engineers' strike has been handled very badly. But the fact is that the engineers' strike was withdrawn on the day the new Government took over. The engineers' strike was continuing for almost a month and during that one month the Indian Airlines was almost totally thrown out of gear. On the day the new Government took over, the engineers withdrew their strike unconditionally.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Madam, he is misleading the House. They continued their go-slow. There was only a statement that the strike is withdrawn, but the go-slow continued.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: Well, I did not have any notice of their go-slow. I have checked with the Ministry. We did not have any notice from the Ministry.

श्री सुरेन्द्रजीत सिंह अहलूवालिया (बिहार) : उनकी डिमांड क्या थी ?

श्री आरिफ मोहम्मद खान : अगर उन्होंने अपनी स्ट्राइक विदड्रा कर ली अपने आप तो हम को क्या पता उनकी क्या डिमांड्स थीं।

श्री सुरेन्द्रजोत सिंह अहलुवालिया : पहले डिमांड रखते हैं या पहले स्ट्राइक करते हैं।

श्री आरिफ मोहम्मद खान : असल में उन्होंने स्ट्राइक बहुत पहले शुरू की थी यानी इस सरकार के बनने से एक महीने पहले। जिस दिन यह नई सरकार बनी उसी दिन उन्होंने अपनी स्ट्राइक वापस ले ली।

श्री सुरेन्द्रजोत सिंह अहलुवालिया : यह नई सरकार लोगों को कष्ट देने के लिए बनी है यह कहना चाहते हैं ? (व्यवधान) मैंने तो सिर्फ यह स्पष्टीकरण चाहा था कि उनकी मांग क्या थी और उनमें से कितनी पूरी की ? (व्यवधान)

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Minister is only putting the facts before the House that the strike was going on for a month and later on they withdrew the strike. Now if they did not put any demand, how can he help it?

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: Madam, I am only providing him with facts. He is free to draw his confusions. I cannot help that.

SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA : It is not my confusion, Madam.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: Madam, all the hon. Members who sought clarifications, almost all of them, have asked about the training of the pilots and the cause of the accident particularly because of the report which has been published in 'the Indian Express' which was referred to by most of the hon. Members. At the moment, as you are aware, we have appointed a Court of Inquiry presided over by a sitting judge of the Karnataka High Court to investigate the cause of the accident. Hon. Members wanted to know the terms of reference of the Court of Inquiry. In fact, when a Court of Inquiry is appointed, the terms of reference of the Court of Inquiry are detailed in the rules which provides for the appointment of the Court of Inquiry. Basically, the job of the Court of Inquiry is to investigate the circumstances and the cause of the accident and give their recommendations for the prevention of such accidents in future.

Madam, this is the first time a Court of Inquiry has been appointed immediately after the occurrence of an accident, under the Aircraft Rules, and this is the highest form of inquiry that can be ordered by the Government. The Court of Inquiry held its first meeting on 27th February, 1990 and invited the public and all other interested parties, including the manufacturers of the aircraft and the engine, to file their affidavits by 31st March, 1990.

When the Court of Inquiry is in progress, it is improper to make any conjectures about the cause of the accident or to make any comments about the accident based on any one piece of information or the other. The investigation of an aircraft accident is a serious matter and all pieces of evidence have to be carefully gathered, analysed and interpreted before a conclusion can be reached. The Court of Inquiry will, precisely, be doing this. The reports appearing in the Press attributing the cause of the accident to one factor or the other do not, therefore, deserve to be given any weightage. We should wait for the Court of Inquiry to complete its work and give its findings. As I have said already, the report of the Court of Inquiry will be made public.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI : Madam, on a point of order. How is it that it has come out? This is a case of leak. It has appeared in the Press : in the 'Indian Express'. I pointed this out the other day. It has given what is contained in the voice recorder. How has it come out? From where did the leakage occur? You say that a Court of Inquiry has been appointed and that we should wait for the report. I agree. You have also said that the report will be made public, given to Parliament. All right. But what about the Ramdas Committee? It has already submitted an interim report. Why don't you give

[Shri Suresh Kalmadi]

it to us? Or, should we read about this also in the Press when Parliament is in Session?

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: First, I would like to deal with the first part of his question and then about the Ramdas Committee's report. Madam, he asked about the readouts of the DFDR and the CVR. A day after the accident, in Bangalore itself, we took the decision that we will not send the DFDR for decoding to the country of manufacture of the aircraft. Therefore, we decided to send the gadget to Canada. We have got back the DFDR.

One hon. Member raised the point that the Airbus Industries has protested that they are not being associated with the work of the Court of Inquiry. After we got the readouts of the DFDR and the CVR, we received a message from the Airbus Industrie and from the French Civil Aviation authorities. The point they made was that this information should not be kept from them, that they should be made privy to the information, namely, what is contained in the DFDR and the CVR. The argument they gave in support of their plea was that if they are able to make out something from the DFDR and the CVR, some immediate action can be taken by them in order to prevent the occurrence of an accident of this nature in future. We took into consideration their plea and we agreed to make this information available to them. At the moment, legally, the readouts of the DFDR and CVR are the property of the Court of Inquiry. But it is not merely the Court of Inquiry which is in possession of the readouts of the DFDR and the CVR. This information not only the Airbus Industrie has apart from us, not only the French Civil Aviation authorities have but all the airlines which are flying Airbus A-320 have it because this is for prevention prevent of any more accidents.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Why don't you give us that information? Why not place it on the Table of the House?

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : I do not think that the read-outs of DFDR or CVR will serve any useful purpose because the basic condition of...

SHRI SURESH KALMADI : This is the major thing which is there. I think we are entitled to have it.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Minister is saying that it is not a secret.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI : We are always kept in the dark. All the air-lines in the world know it, except we in the Parliament.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: He is saying that it is not a part of secret information. It is there with the Airbus Industrie. You have also read it in the paper. I do not think the Minister will mind if you want to hear from him, but the thing is, he says, it will not serve any useful purpose because ...

SHRI SURESH KALMADI : We are making the demand. At least now it should come.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: I have stated earlier that the information, legally speaking, is the property of the Court of Inquiry and it is basically to help the Court of Inquiry to come to a conclusion. (*Interruptions*) If you do not want to hear the clarifications ...

श्री सुरेन्द्रजीत सिंह अहलुवालिया : यह एक मजाक हो गया है। हर मंत्री कहता है कि जवाब नहीं सुनना चाहते तो वे जायेंगे। यह धमकी क्यों देते हैं? यह हमारा अधिकार है प्रश्न पूछना। सुबह भी एक मंत्री ने ऐसा कहा और ऐसा कहकर भाग गये। I need your protection. It is our right to ask.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : Protection for creating disturbance.

SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA : If it is disturbance, I need protection because you have disturbed. You have disturbed (*Interruptions*).

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: I am on my legs. Please do not raise your voice. Please do not raise your voice, I am requesting you. (*Interruptions*).

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You please sit down. You had an opportunity to ask the clarification. You cannot continue to ask the clarification on every sentence, at every point of time. Please listen to the Minister. Have patience. He cannot be getting up and sitting down for every answer. Just let him finish.

श्री सुरेन्द्रजीत सिंह अहलुवालिया : धमकी क्यों देते हैं ?

उपसभापति : कोई धमकी नहीं दे रहे हैं। बैठिये।

श्री हरवेन्द्र सिंह हंसपाल (पंजाब) : अहलुवालिया जी ने कहा कि मंत्री महोदय ने यह कहा कि अगर नहीं सुनना चाहते तो मैं बैठ जाता हूं ...(व्यवधान)... मैडम, अहलुवालिया जी ने कहा कि मंत्री महोदय सुबह यह कहकर भाग गये ... (व्यवधान)...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Let him finish. Now you do not interrupt.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN : I said, please do not raise your voice.

SHRI PUTTAPAGA RADHAKRISHNA (Andhra Pradesh): इन्होंने कहा कि मंत्री महोदय ऐसी कहकर भाग गये। Can he say like that?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You please sit down. Let him finish.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI (Maharashtra): I want to submit through you to my friend that this is a very serious subject. He has properly explained that it is with the Airbus Industrie so that accidents do not take place. That point has been made by him. Let us listen to him. (*Interruptions*).

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : They do not want to listen. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI HARVENDRA SINGH HANSPAL: This is the second incident today.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It may be, but in the morning I made it very clear that the Minister was not bound by any rules to answer but because the House was worried and on a request from a very senior Member who is sitting before me ... (*Interruptions*). No, he did not leave the House. He finished his reply and left. You cannot run the House like this.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: I have merely said that I will sit down if you do not want to listen to me. This is what I have said.

SHRI HARVENDRA SINGH HANSPAL : This is a threat.

SHRI KAMAL MORARKA (Rajasthan): What do you want? Do you want that the Minister should go on talking. This is not the rule.

उपसभापति : आप पंजाब में रहते हैं। थ्रेट क्या होता है यह आपको मालूम होना चाहिए।

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: If one says that I am not ready to subject myself to unnecessary heckling, then this is a threat. Very good definition.

SHRI HARVENDRA SINGH HANSPAL: We do not heckle.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: But you are not to be easily threatened. Why are you so obsessed with that?

उपसभापति : सुनिये, सीरियस मामला है, लोगों की जिन्दगी का सवाल है। He has answered. Let him speak about it.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: The point I was making was that this is the property of the Court of Inquiry and it is going to be the basic document on which the Court of Inquiry will establish the cause of the accident. With the permission of Court of Inquiry, we have shared the information contained in the CVR and DFDR only with the Civil Aviation authorities of some other countries, the aircraft manufacturers and the Indian Airlines management from the point of view of prevention of accidents. A basic condition of this sharing of information has been that there would be no comment on the cause of accident at Bangalore based on this information. Now if some reports are appearing in the Press, I am not in a position either to deny or confirm those reports. So I will appeal to the hon. Member, Shri Suresh Kalmadi, to appreciate this position. Without the permission of the Court of Inquiry, we could not share this information even with the Civil Aviation authorities or the manufacturers of the Air Bus. We took their permission. I am sure the Hon. Member will appreciate this position and not insist on laying this information on the Table of the House. As far as Government is concerned, the report of the Court of Inquiry should be awaited before arriving at any conclusion with regard to the cause of accident at Bangalore. I feel that the cause of the public is least served; on the contrary the public is likely to be misled if there is speculation on the cause of the accident.

मैडम, एक बात मैं इसलिए कहना चाहता हूं। खास तौर से अहलुवालिया साहब ने यह बात कही थी इसलिए मैं इसका स्पष्टीकरण देना चाहूंगा। अहलुवालिया साहब ने कहा कि हमारे पायलट जो ट्रेनिंग लेने गये थे वह गंभीर नहीं थे और उन्होंने अपना समय ट्रेनिंग लेने के बजाय तफरीह करने में इधर-उधर घूमने में बिताया मैं समझता हूं कि इससे ज्यादती हमारे पायलटस के साथ दूसरे कोई नहीं हो सकती है। हमारे पायलट दुनियां के बेहतरीन पायलटस में हैं और हमारे पायलटस की जो क्षमता है उनकी जो प्रतिभा है उस पर इस तरह का लांछन लगाना, मुझे उम्मीद है कि माननीय सदस्य इस बारे में पूरी जानकारी हासिल करेंगे और उसके बाद वह अपनी राय को बदलेंगे। मैं समझता हूं इसमें कहीं कोई सन्देह नहीं है कि दुनियां के दूसरे देशों से हमारे पायलट अच्छे हैं लेकिन अगर कहीं कोई दूसरी राय अहलुवालिया साहब की हो भी तो मेरा उनसे निवेदन है कि यह समय नहीं है जब आप उनको डिमोरलाइज करने की कोशिश करें या उनके खिलाफ ऐसे आरोप लगाने की कोशिश करें जिनके अन्दर कोई तथ्य नहीं है।

श्री सुरेन्द्रजीत सिंह अहलुवालिया : मैंने आपसे पूछा था कि जो पायलट ट्रेनिंग लेने गये थे क्या उनकी कोई डायरी मेनटन की जाती थी जिससे यह पता चल कि कितने दिन की ट्रेनिंग थी, कितने दिन उन्होंने ट्रेनिंग ली और कितने दिन तफरीह करने में गुजारे। यह कहने से पहले क्या आपने डायरी चेक की है और आप पूरा विश्वास करते हैं कि उन्होंने पूरी ट्रेनिंग ली? उनकी काबलियत को मैंने कभी चैलेंज नहीं किया। उस ट्रेनिंग के दौरान वह पूरे उतरे या नहीं उतरे यह बताने की मंत्री जी कृपा करें।

श्री आरिफ मोहम्मद खान : आपने उनकी काबलियत के ऊपर सन्देह ही व्यक्त नहीं किया बल्कि आपने उनकी सिंसेयर्टी के ऊपर सन्देह व्यक्त किया (**व्यवधान**) यह मेरे पास नोट है और इस सदन के रिकार्ड में है (**व्यवधान**) आपने उनकी सिंसेयर्टी के ऊपर सन्देह किया, इसलिए मैंने आपत्ति की (**व्यवधान**)

श्री सुरेन्द्रजीत सिंह अहलुवालिया : आप को आपत्ति इसलिए है क्योंकि आप उनके मंत्री है (**व्यवधान**) गालियां नहीं सुन सकते हैं (**व्यवधान**) मैं प्लेन मे जो मारे गये उनकी तरफ से बोल रहा हूं। आप मंत्रालय की तरफ से बोल रहे हैं (**व्यवधान**) और आप एक उड्डयन मंत्रालय की तरफ से बोल रहे हैं। मैं उनकी गंभीर

पर शक और शुबहा करता हूं। आप प्रमाणित करके बताइये कि वे पूरे गंभीर थे और ट्रेनिंग में पूरे गंभीर उतरे।

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: Madam, he has every right to stick to his opinion and I have every right to stick to my opinion. I feel that our pilots are highly skilled and professional people, and their calibre and proficiency are comparable to the best in the world.

SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: These are all phrases.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: About the diary, Madam, I don't know what he means by "diary." But our pilots have undergone the prescribed training for flying the A-320 aircraft, and I want to assure you that there need not be the slightest doubt about their ability to fly the A-320 aircraft safely. Even in the normal course, our A-320 pilots undergo refresher training every six months as against the normal one year for other aircraft, and their training programme is monitored by the Indian Airlines as well as the DGCA. Their training will be updated and strengthened from time to time in the light of experience gained in flying the aircraft.

Another question which has been raised about A-320 by almost all the honourable Members was with regard to the reported snags in the aircraft. Madam, on the snags, no aircraft of any make is completely free of snags. It is the normal practice throughout the world to allow aircraft to fly with certain permissible snags which do not affect the safety of the flight. The reason is that modern commercial aircraft have got duplicate or triplicate back-up fail-safe systems. That is why a list is maintained for each type of aircraft, called the "minimum equipment list," under which minor snags can be carried forward, and which do not affect the safety of the flight in any way. This minimum equipment list suggested by the manufacturers and issued with the approval of airworthiness authorities. The technical snags which have been noticed in the operation of the A-320 aircraft relate to smoke warning, pressurization, hydraulic system, auxiliary power unit and nose wheel steering. Both the DGCA and the Indian Airlines' management have looked into these snags. While the management is taking corrective action to rectify recurrence of these snags, the DGCA has directed that such snags except auxiliary power unit are not included in the minimum equipment list so that they cannot be carried forward. I would like to assure the honourable Members that the problem of technical snags, which is inherent in the operation of any aircraft, will be carefully attended to and no precaution will be spared or no compromise will be made in rectifying these snags.

A reference was made to the need for airconditioned hangars for the A-320 aircraft. I am advised that there is no such requirement. I understand that in some countries where airconditioned hangars are made available, they are really for the convenience of the staff and not as a requirement for the parking of the aircraft.

In my statement I have mentioned about three air hostesses who had done a commendable job in saving the lives of the passengers. These air hostesses have already been rewarded. They have been given three increments and letters of commendation. Last month we had announced that all the Corporations under the Civil Aviation Ministry will organise a function every year for recognizing distinguished services rendered by the employees from each category and, I am sure, when the annual function of the Airlines will take place, these air hostesses will get rewards at that time. Madam, about the survivors and the next of the kin who have no source of income, we have already given instructions to the Indian Airlines to provide at least one person from the family, the next of the kin of the deceased, job in the Indian Airlines.

[Shri Arif Mohd. Khan]

One question which was raised by hon. Shri Kulkarni was regarding appointment of an evaluation committee. He asked me whether it was true that an evaluation committee was formed and a letter of intent was issued to Boeing 757 and then an unsolicited offer came and the decision was changed. Madam, what the hon. Member stated is true. The Indian Airlines during 1983-84 carried out studies for augmentation of its fleet for the period ending 1991. The studies had evaluated different types of aircraft then available. The Board of Indian Airlines appointed on the 22nd of August, 1983 a committee comprising the Air Chief Marshal Dilbagh Singh, Shri M. M. Kohli who was Secretary of Civil Aviation, Capt. K. Chaddha, Managing Director, Indian Airlines, Capt D. Bose Deputy Managing Director of Air India, which recommended on 22nd of May, 1984 induction of Boeing 757 aircraft into the fleet of the Indian Airlines. The recommendations of the committee were considered by of the committee were considered by Airlines and the Indian Airlines management was authorised by the Board to acquire 12 Boeing 757 aircraft after obtaining approval of the Government. The Indian Airlines, with the approval of the Goverment, placed a letter of intent on the Boeing company on the 24th of July, 1984 for purchase of 12 Boeing 757 aircraft. While the proposal of the Indian Airlines for firming up the acquisition of 12 Boeings was still under consideration, an unsolicited offer, proposal was received by the Government in October, 1984. The A-320 aircraft, it is true, was launched in July, 1984 and the proposal was made by the Airbus Industrie only in October, 1984. So what you asked, whether the engine was on the drawing board at the time when the decision was taken to acquire these aircraft, is correct. The engine was still on the drawing board when the decision was taken, and this unsolicited offer of the Airbus Industrie was not evaluated by any high-powered technical committee; it was evaluated by a Technical Cell which I have come to know, I have been advised by the Ministry, again was an informal arrangement. It was not a formal committee. A Technical Cell was created in the Indian Airlines, and this Cell was asked to carry out the evaluation of this unsolicited offer.

The various arguments which were given in favour of acquisition of A-320 aircraft were these. The techno-economic analysis of the Airbus offer carried out by the Indian Airlines showed that it had the following advantages over Boeing 757 offer. They stated that the Airbus A-320 aircraft fitted with V-2500 engine consumed 19.06 per cent less fuel than Boeing 757 aircraft fitted with Rolls Royce engine over the stage length of 600 km. which is the average sector length to be operated by the new aircraft. And in comparison to the other engine which, I think, Shri Suresh Kalmadi mentioned, the CFM engine, the point made was that it would be 7 per cent more fuel-efficient than the other engine. But no study has been conducted so far. But I have been advised that even the Airbus Industries today is not claiming that this engine is 7 per cent fuel-efficient than the other engine.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: You must take compensation from them.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: Madam Deputy Chairman, I am not going to disturb you, I want to ask this. I quoted many instances. I don't want to go through the affairs of those officers and bureaucrats. My point is what was this magic of changing the letter of intent. No Government does that because it is done at the risk of the Government itself. My question is, are you going to have an inquiry about who are the bureaucrats and the Indian Airlines Directors who are . . . *(Interruptions)*. The basic thrust of my question was that these bureaucrats and the Indian Airlines Directors are totally responsible. That is why my friend Mr. Narayanasamy said, you throw all mud on the

politicians. For heaven's sake don't do that. Be true to yourself and say inquiry will be made and other Secretaries—I don't want to take the names because it is not the practice...

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: In fact, since you raised all these points, I am trying to clarify. I don't think Narayanasamy's agitation was justified because nowhere else have I gone into this question. Here too I am going into this question only because these points were raised by the hon. Member. Apart from fuel efficiency, the other argument which was given in favour of the acquisition of the airbus was that it will increase fund generation. Then it was said that it is a futuristic design. A-320 aircraft was stated to be a futuristic design based on the maximum modern technology capable of being operated well up to the end of the 20th century. It was said that the Airbus A-320 aircraft will be capable of operating on all airfields currently operated by 737 aircraft without any additional investment on airfield infrastructure.

SHRI ANAND SHARMA (Himachal Pradesh): The Minister has just now stated about the claim made and the notings made by the officials. The Airbus Industrie has reiterated this particular claim recently after the crash. It says no additional infrastructure was required at the airports and the airports, as they were, were fully capable of meeting the requirements. I seek your reaction on this.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: That exactly is my point. That I am sure will to some extent satisfy the curiosity of some hon. Members who were greatly agitated about the lack of investment on creation of ground facilities, because this was a deliberate decision. The decision was that the facilities on the ground are not needed. The only investment which is needed is of buying aircraft of futuristic design. (*Interruptions*) The point that I am making is that there is a mis-match. We have made huge investment on asquisition of new aircraft. We have decided to suspend almost Rs. 2,500 crores, but there is a total mismatch as far as the facilities on the ground are concerned. Now, today the National Airports Authority are of the view that an airport of the length of 6,000 feet is not enough for smooth operation. It may be very safe, but for smooth operation they feel there should be standardisation and at least 1,500 more feet to the existing 6,000 feet is needed. The point that I was making was justification of many Members being agitated. The Government has taken note of all these things. The point which I was making was these were the arguments which were given in favour of the decision for acquisition of A-320 aircraft. It is not very difficult to come to the conclusion that these arguments do not hold good. But the only point which I would like to emphasise is that if there are any irregularities, if there is any basis to the allegations which have been made and which have been published by many newspapers about the technical aspects or safety aspects or security aspects or the operational aspects of the Indian Arlines, they will be looked into separately.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: What is meant by "will be looked into separately"? A fraud has been committed. I had requested for legal action return those engines, cancel the order and take them to the court, Are you prepared to do that and fix the responsibility of those Secretaries and bureaucrats?

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: Well, I am sure very soon I will come back to the House and then...

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI : With the good news.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: All the points which the hon. Members have made have been noted. If the performance of the aircraft is not in accordance with the specifications as given by Airbus Industrie or in

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accordance with the claims which they had made at the time they made this offer to us there is no reason why Government should not go into that question.

Madam, I would like to conclude...

SHRI VISHWA BANDHU GUPTA (Delhi): Mr. Minister, I would like to make two small points. Madam, one of the points which has not been covered by the hon. Minister is when we are dealing with aircraft which have a propeller or which have been flying for long periods of time, with a lot of experience gained, certain norms have been esablished about checking the safety and the programming of such aircraft. Now, in this case of the fly-by-wire A-320, what were the norms that the hon. Minister used to see that it was safe because not even the Airbus Industry has clarified this particular point. This is the first time that this aircraft has come. What was the basis on which they based this aircraft? This is number one.

Secondly, about the computer which they say will operate efficiently even in temperatures which are high, according to the information that I have received from pilots who have been flying and who have been involved in this matter they say that they are going to face great difficulties as the weather changes in summer. The computer will not control the aircraft as specified by the Airbus Industries. We will have difficulties in take off and landing. When the aircraft is flying at 30,000 or 27,000 feet height and the temperatures are—27 or —40 degrees Celsius, the computer will operate efficiently. As far as coming down or the final landing is concerned, there is a time lag with the computer between taking over from the manual or transferring it back to the manual. So I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether these points have received his attention and the Committee which is to get the answers on the further safety of the aircraft has looked into it. If they have not, what is being done about it?

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Madam, I want to ask this because he says he is concluding. He has not answered my major clarifications. One is about the Ramdas Committee. Secondly, is the airbus going to remain grounded till the report of the court of inquiry is placed on the Table of the House? You have not mentioned that. Thirdly, you have not dealt with the demand which we made that a Parliamentary Committee must probe into the safety aspect.

SHRI KAMAL MORARKA: Madam, I have two small points. He has answered my other points by saying that the court of inquiry is seized of the matter and so he does not want to deal with them. Fine. One is whether against the norm of Airbus Industrie of one sang per thousand hours Air France has been experiencing twelve snags every thousand hours. Secondly, has Mr. Raje, Chairman of the National Airports Authority, made a statement that the instrument-landing system is a luxury for India? Has he said that?

उपसभापति : प्रोफेसर साहब, आप भी पूछ लीजिए तो फाइनल जवाब हो ।

PROF. C. LAKSHMANNA (Andhra Pradesh): Madam Deputy Chairman, I have two small points to seek clarifications on. One is, this futuristic aircraft, when it was put into test-flight, when it bombed, is it a fact that India alone went in for the V-2500 engines while all other countries went in for different enginees? If they have gone in for different engines and you alone have gone in for this engine, what were the reasons that were given by the airlines to go in for the same? What special guarantees were given by the Airbus Industrie with regard to the rectifications that were responsible for the bombing of this aircraft in the test-flight and were they satisfactory and

how did they compare with the present situation in the thirteen airbuses which are with us? Thirdly, is it a fact that two A-320 aircraft had to be cannibalised because Airbus Industrie was not able to supply spare parts as agreed to under the agreement? If that was the case, what special action has been taken over a period of time and what action will be taken for not supplying spare parts and for cannibalising these aircrafts? Has this any effect upon the working of the aircraft and the subsequent crash?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, Mr. Minister, finally. (*Interruptions*). I think every question has been covered, from the tail of the aircraft to the nose of the aircraft. Let him answer.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: The major things remain.

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: I want a small clarification. I want to know from the Minister whether it is a fact that the instrument-landing system (category II), at various airports, particularly in Delhi, Bombay and Calcutta is not fully operational because of the absence of certain important navigational facilities? If so, is it affecting the operation of the airbuses?

PROF. (MRS.) ASIMA CHATTERJEE (*Nominated*): Madam, I have a small clarification to ask.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Yes. You are welcome. Please hear the scientist.

PROF. (MRS.) ASIMA CHATTERJEE: I have three points. The first is, did the computer give the signal for danger? Secondly, was the performance of the engines not consistent with the manufacturer's specifications? Thirdly, as far as the reinduction of the fly-by-wire aircraft into the Indian Airlines fleet is concerned, the findings regarding the engine performance coupled with the firm stand of the Indian Commercial Pilots Association that its members would resume flying the fourteen grounded A-320s only after the cause of the accident is known are likely to delay the move. Is this true? I want clarifications on these points.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: Madam, as for the Ramdas Committee report, the Committee was constituted to go into the question of preparedness of the Indian Airlines... to receive and operate these aircrafts. So I personally feel that it has basically gone into the questions which relate to the training programme, and the infrastructural facilities which are necessary to handle this newly acquired aircraft. The Ramdas Committee has not gone into the question of safety security or airworthiness of the aircraft.

AN HON. MEMBER : It is co-related.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: Well, you can say that. My point is, basically the Authority which has a regulatory role to play and which has the responsibility to perform these duties is the Director-General of Civil Aviation. The Ramdas Committee's Report is under examination of the Director-General of Civil Aviation and the Ministry of Civil Aviation and whatever steps are needed to strengthen the Indian Airlines on all these points. I would like to assuer the hon. Members that no effort will be spared and no compromise will be made as far as the question of enforcement of safety standards is concerned.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Let us give some time.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: Definitely. Likewise, the hon. Member has raised three questions about the computer, about the specifications and whether the engine behaviour was consistent with the specifications or the claims made by the Airbus Industrie. I think, the Court of Inquiry

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will go into all these questions. So it is not even proper for me to know how the computer behaves or the engine behaves. This will be for the Court of Inquiry and the Court of Inquiry will establish the cause of the accident. And then all these questions can be taken up. About the ILS Shri Morarka has said that the Chairman of the National Airports Authority has mentioned somewhere that it is a luxury in India. Basically I do not know what he meant but he was opposed to the setting up of ILS at Indian Airports. There has been a view that our weather conditions are the most congenial, the most suitable for flying... (*Interruptions*)...

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH (West Bengal): That is his view.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: No, no. That view is not without basis. I am coming to that. Let me complete it first. The argument which was given by the Evaluation Committee at the time when they decided to acquire A-320 was not making any investment on the upgradation of the ground facilities in the airports. We basically feel that there is need for upgradation of the facilities at the airports. We will have to make investments. This mismatch which exists today cannot be allowed to persist. So in fact, I am sure, Mr. Morarka will be happy to know that the Government has taken a decision yesterday. The Finance Minister has announced in his Budget that the customs duty on navigational equipment has been reduced from 177 per cent to 25 per cent.

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA (Rajasthan): It is just from one pocket to another.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: I am not much aware of the pocket from it goes to where. The point I am making is that the Goevrnment is concerned about this and this question has been discussed and deliberated upon. We have already taken a decision, but the National Airports Authority and other authorities concerned are already working out a plan for the upgradation of the airport facilities in detail. And I am sure that very soon we will be able to take a decision. It was only in this context that I had raised this matter with the Finance Minister pointing out that the total cost of the project is much less than the duty which we will be paying on the equipment which is to be imported. And, the Finance Minister has responded positively by announcing this reduction in the rate of Customs duty which has been brought down from 177 per cent to 25 per cent. Now, I think it will be easier for the Civil Aviation Ministry to go in for the upgradation of the existing facilities and for creating more facilities on the ground.

SHRI KAMAL MORARKA: I asked a question about Air France.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: Well, a question has been raised by Mr. Morarka. I do not have the figures available with me with regard to the percentage of snags which they are experiencing. But I would try to collect that information.

SHRI KAMAL MORARKA: Kindly do that.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: We want to know whether the aircraft will fly only after the Court of Inquiry and the other Committee submit their report.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: We have been discussing this question at great length. The other day I had a long meeting with the pilots. The pilots have told me even before that meeting that since the fleet has been grounded, they are not ready to resume operation of this aircraft unless they know the cause of the accident. I asked them specifically: "The Court of Inquiry is going to submit its report by the 31st of May. So, will

you wait till the 31st of May?" They said, "No. If the read-out of the CVR and DFDR is made available to the Pilots' Association..." "—I think it is Pilots' Association..."—Is that correct?

AN HON. MEMBER: It is the Indian Commercial Pilots' Association.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: They said, "No. If the read-out of the CVR and the DFDR is made available to us, we will make our studies."... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: This has been given to everybody. So, why not to Parliament? We also want to know. Why are you keeping it to yourself?... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: You must appreciate that the pilots who are operating this aircraft are not 'everybody'.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: This is an open Government. So, why don't you come out with it?

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: I have no problem. In fact, being an open Government is not a problem. I have repeatedly said that wherever it is essential for safety purposes, we will share this information with those agencies, where it becomes essential from the safety viewpoint... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: You form a Parliamentary Committee and give it to them.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: I think Mr. Suresh Kalamadi, as a former pilot, must be a member of the pilots' association and I think he should not have any problem.

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: The honourable Minister may consider... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: In that case, as a member of the Pilots' association, I would get to know more information than as a Member of Parliament... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: This is not fair. I have already said that if the pilots who are going to operate them do not know the cause of the accident and since we have made this information available to the other airlines from the safety viewpoint, I think we should not deny this to them and that too with the permission of the Court of Inquiry whose property it is, the read-out of the DFDR and the CVR... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Madam, this is very important... *(Interruptions)*...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Everything is important.

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Madam, the Minister says that the read-out of the CVR and the DFDR will be made available to the ICPA, but Parliament will be informed only after the Report of the Court of Inquiry comes! This is strange... *(Interruptions)*...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: He has explained it already. Please sit down.

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Madam, the Press is publishing everything. But nothing is given to Parliament... *(Interruptions)*... They have no respect for this institution... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: If I had no respect for these institutions, I won't agree to make this information available. I think I have gone in detail into this question. The argument that they have given is that from the safety viewpoint it is very essential.

4.00 P.M.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: We have no objection to giving them at all. All that we are saying is that you should share it with us too.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: I am sure that the hon. Member will appreciate that it is not a question of sharing information just for the sake of sharing information. It is a question of sharing information for safety purposes. With whom has this information been shared? This information has been shared with the persons who are flying the aircraft. (*Interruptions*) Now my problem is that I have shared this information with the specific purpose of ensuring the safety of the travelling public, those who are flying by this aircraft, not necessarily in India but even outside India also. Officially it is known that they have access to this information. Now if somebody, after having gained access to this information tries to plant wrong information in the newspapers, I have no check on that. I cannot do anything about it. आपने कम्प्यूटर के बारे में पूछा है। यह बहुत टेक्नीकल जानकारी है। वैसे मुझे बताया गया है कि computers will operate up to 51 degree centigrade. लेकिन आप जितना डिटैल में पूछें मैं डिटेल में सूचना आपको उपलब्ध करा दूंगा।

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Madam, they are not going to fly without the Court of Inquiry report coming out. The people have a right to know what had gone wrong. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: Madam, I would like to state with all the force at my command that no compromise will be made and no chances will be taken as far as the safety of the travelling public is concerned. No risk will be taken, no chance will be taken and no compromise will be made. We are fully alive and we will ensure that the safety standards are fully enforced. There is no question of taking any chance, any risk or making any compromise as far as the safety requirements are concerned. Thank you, very much.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Madam, much has been written in the newspapers and much has been reported and questions are being raised. Before the A-320 aircraft is reintroduced, I think a sort of confidence needs to be developed among the passengers or among the masses who travel by air. I agree with the hon. Minister that the Pilots who will be piloting those aircraft must be assured of the safety aspect of that aircraft. Similarly, the passengers need to be assured. But already due to may be disinformation or various other reasons, a sort of disinformation is percolating down. Therefore, before A-320 aircraft is reintroduced, I would expect the Minister of Civil Aviation to take steps so that a sense of confidence is created among the masses who travel by air.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: I totally agree. It will not merely be an exercise. It will be a genuine confidence-building exercise. As I have said earlier, we have already given instructions. Very intensive checks are being carried out by the teams which have been constituted by the Director-General of Civil Aviation in Delhi, Hyderabad and in Bombay. I would like to further assure the hon. Members of this House that on the question of enforcement of safety standards we will not make any compromise, we will not take any chance and we will not risk the human lives. We have also given instructions to the D.G.C.A. to ensure that this minimum snag list to which I have referred earlier in my Statement must be revised and the aircraft must not be allowed to fly with the snags.

MOTION OF THANKS ON PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS—contd.

श्री मुख्तियार सिंह मलिक (हरियाणा) : मैडम डिप्टीचेयरमन, जो प्रेजीडेंट के अभिभाषण के ऊपर सदन के अंदर बहस चल रही है और जिसका प्रस्ताव माननीय वीरेन्द्र वर्मा जी ने हाउस के सामने पेश